

James Madison to Edmund Randolph, October 21, 1787. Transcription: The Writings of James Madison, ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1900-1910.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH. CHIC. HIST. SOC. MSS.

New York, October 21, 1787.

My dear Friend

I mentioned in a late letter that I had addressed to your care a small box of books for the University. I now enclose the Bill of lading. I enclosed also a bill of lading for another box destined for Mr. W. Hay. Will you be so good as to have it handed to him? I paid two dollars for its freight from France to this port, which he may repay to you. The money you remitted by me to Col. Carrington having somewhat exceeded the amount of his demand, the two dollars may the more properly pass into your hands.

I have received no letter from you since your halt at the Bolling Green. We hear that opinions are various in Virginia on the plan of the Convention. I have received, within a few days, a letter from the Chancellor, by which I find that he gives it his approbation; and another from the President of William and Mary, which, though it does not absolutely reject the Constitution, criticises it pretty freely. The newspapers in the Northern and Middle States begin to teem with controversial publications. The attacks seem to be principally levelled against the organization of the Government, and the omission of the provisions contended for in favor of the press, and juries, &c. A new combatant, however, with considerable address and plausibility, strikes at the foundation. He represents the situation

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of the United States to be such as to tender any government improper and impracticable which forms the States into one

nation, and is to operate directly on the people. Judging from the newspapers, one would suppose that the adversaries were the most numerous and the most earnest. But there is no other evidence that it is the fact. On the contrary, we learn that the Assembly of New Hampshire, which received the Constitution on the point of their adjournment, were extremely pleased with it. All the information from Massachusetts denotes a favorable impression there. The Legislature of Connecticut have unanimously recommended the choice of a Convention in that State, and Mr. Baldwin, who is just from the spot, informs me, that, from present appearances, the opposition will be inconsiderable; that the Assembly, if it depended on them, would adopt the system almost unanimously; and that the clergy and all the literary men are exerting themselves in its favor. Rhode Island is divided; the majority being violently against it. The temper of this State cannot yet be fully discerned. A strong party is in favor of it. But they will probably be outnumbered, if those whose numbers are not yet known should take the opposite side. New Jersey appears to be zealous. Meetings of the people in different counties are declaring their approbation, and instructing their representatives. There will probably be a strong opposition in Pennsylvania. The other side, however, continue to be sanguine. Doctor Carroll, who came hither lately from Maryland, tells me, that the public voice there appears at present to be decidedly in favor of the Constitution. Notwithstanding all these circumstances, I am far from considering the public mind as fully known, or finally settled on the subject. They amount only to a strong presumption that the general sentiment in the Eastern and Middle States is friendly to the proposed system at this time.

Present me respectfully to Mrs. R. and accept the most fervent wishes for your happiness, from your affect. friend.